



The Reading Process

A GUIDE TO THE TEACHING AND LEARNING
OF READING

www.pdst.ie

Primary Resource



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Introduction

The reading process is complex and multi-dimensional. Effective teachers have an understanding of this complexity and are able to use a range of teaching approaches to produce confident and independent readers. Recent work completed by the NCCA (Research Report 15, 2012) identified a number of components that need to be considered in the teaching of reading.

Among these are:

- the acquisition of varied and rich vocabulary
- the development of phonological processes
- the need for the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies
- a renewed focus on reading fluency
- the need to ensure that motivation and enjoyment of reading are key aspects of the reading process

This booklet attempts to highlight the above components by providing some background knowledge on each and by outlining practical opportunities for their application in the classroom.

Components of Reading



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Gradual Release of Responsibility

Role of the Teacher	Modelling	Sharing	Guiding	Applying
Degree of control	The teacher demonstrates and explains the reading strategy being introduced. This is achieved by thinking aloud the mental processes used when using the strategy	The teacher continues to demonstrate the use of the strategy with a range of texts inviting students to contribute ideas and information.	The teacher provides scaffolds for students to use the strategy. Teacher provides feedback.	The teacher offers support and encouragement as necessary.
	The students participate by actively attending to the demonstrations.	Students contribute ideas and begin to practise the use of the strategy in whole-class situations.	Students work with help from the teacher and peers to practise the use of the strategy using a variety of texts.	The students work independently to apply the strategy in context across the curriculum.
Role of the Student				

- First, the teacher explicitly describes the skill/strategy/reading behaviour about to be taught and states why good readers use this skill/strategy/reading behaviour when reading.
- The teacher explicitly models the skill/strategy/reading behaviour by demonstrating and thinking aloud while the children observe the strategy in action.
- Following this, the children are encouraged to help the teacher to use the skill/strategy/reading behaviour in a whole class setting.
- Next, the children engage in collaborative use of the skill/strategy/reading behaviour through guided practice where the teacher gradually releases responsibility for the strategy to the children through scaffolding instruction and facilitation.
- Finally, the children engage in independent use of the skill/strategy/reading behaviour in subsequent lessons.

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Planning for the Teaching of Reading

When planning for reading lessons, Gill (2008) recommends that teachers ask themselves the following questions as they preview the text.

Gills Questions:

1. What do my students know about this topic?
2. What specific vocabulary or concepts do they need to understand before they can understand this passage?
3. How can I get my students interested in this topic?
4. What purpose can I provide for the reading?
5. What activities will help my students engage in this text?
6. Do parts of this text allow for purposeful repeated readings?
7. Is there potential for teaching word identification strategies in this text?
8. What strategies do my students need to learn?
9. What strategies can I demonstrate with this particular text?

Suggested 6 Step Approach to a Reading Lesson

Steps to a Reading Lesson	Possible Focus
1. Book Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Prior knowledge➤ Context of the book➤ Predict using cover, title, author➤ Difficult words➤ Picture Walk
2. Strategy Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Consolidating various strategies e.g. connecting or word attack skills e.g. chunking
3. Independent Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Remind children of skills they will be using➤ Reading aloud or Silent reading (pace, rate, intonation, expression, fluency)➤ Here the teacher supports the child in specific areas to drive improvement
4. Returning to the Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Comprehension➤ Effective questioning (literal, inferential and evaluative – a ménage of all)
5. Response to the Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Critical thinking through discussion➤ Giving opinions➤ Asking questions➤ Follow up activity
6. Re-reading Guided Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Where?➤ When?➤ Why?

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Section 1



Motivation refers to a child's eagerness and willingness to read. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life* (2011) states that positive attitude and motivation are vital for progression in literacy and numeracy. It also states that "... all learners should benefit from the opportunity to experience the joy and excitement of getting 'lost' in a book (in both paper based and digital formats)" (p. 43).

Teachers can promote excitement and motivation to read by providing students with:

- interesting and rich texts;
- choice of text;
- authentic purposes for reading;
- opportunities to explore, interact and experiment with text.

Motivated readers require a safe, supportive classroom environment, one in which both the physical aspects and the culture encourages opportunities to use and combine printed, spoken, visual and digital texts. Students benefit from such an environment that allows them to feel confident in taking risks, in sharing texts, in responding openly to texts and in working collaboratively with each other.

Fostering an enjoyment of reading can be achieved in a variety of ways by ensuring:

- a print rich environment: which provides a broad range of reading material matched to children's stages of development and interests (Lipson, Mosenthal, Mekkelson, & Russ, 2004);
- choice and control: to self-select books for independent reading, to self-select topics for writing and to choose activities in response to reading material;
- that the children are read to every day using varied voice tones and expressions;

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- optimal challenge in order towards moving children beyond their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978);
- opportunities for collaboration and social interaction (Guthrie, et al., 2007). This can occur in several ways: e.g. responding personally to texts, sharing likes and dislikes and in recommending books to each other.

Other ways of motivating students are outlined in the table below:

Ideas for Motivating Students	Explanation
Reading Time	Establish a time for independent reading DEAR time, USSR time and be a role model for students by sharing your enthusiasm for reading. Share with pupils which reading material you enjoy
Sharing	After independent reading sessions, allow time for students to share what they have just read with partner/group/class
Reading to Students	Help students experience a wide variety of texts by reading many different text forms, authors and genres regularly. It is very valuable to allow time daily where the children are read to for enjoyment
Using Fads	Make literacy links to current fads/trends such as current sporting events
Films and TV	Provide opportunities for students to explore reading material related to appropriate films/TV programmes
Poetry	Ensure a variety of poetry texts is available
Inventories/surveys	Distribute a questionnaire at the start of the year to help select motivating material based on student's interests
Book Discussion Groups	Provide opportunities for students to discuss a common text that has been read
Class-created Books	Make a class book with sections dedicated to favourite jokes, riddles or songs, etc. If your school has been involved in the "Write a Book" competition, display books from the competition
Publicity Campaign	Have students create a publicity campaign for a text /author, using posters, written advertisements etc.

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Different Audiences	Pair students with reading buddies from different class levels
Reading Timeline	Get students to produce a timeline of their lives naming their favourite texts at different stages throughout their years
Read with a Friend	Have multiple copies of a text available so friends can read it simultaneously and discuss
This Is Your Life	Student groups who have read the same text can create a 'This Is Your Life' programme based on a central character. Introduced guests can be other characters from text
Lonely Texts	Display lesser used texts under a banner called 'Loneliest Texts in the Library!' An incentive could be offered to students who read and review such texts
TV vs. Reading	Create a chart recording time students spend reading vs. watching TV at home. Jointly formulate guidelines for earning incentives, e.g. Class reading time > TV time = Reward!
Where in the World	Give each student a copy of a world map. Every time they read a text that relates to a country in some way, have students colour in the country. Provide incentives for reaching specified goals, e.g. a reward for every five countries coloured, etc.

Adapted From First Steps Reading Second Edition

In order to work effectively with unmotivated students, teachers should

- demonstrate that they are genuinely interested in the child, in what he thinks, what he does, what he feels and what he cares about
- select books and encourage students to write stories that reflect their interests and their level of achievement
- anticipate students problems and prevent inappropriate behaviours from occurring
- create a warm supportive interpersonal relationship with the student
- show a personal interest in children's lives by demonstrating genuine interest, caring, commitment and concern
- create learning situations and activities in which children are interested and can meet with success
- structure the environment to ensure children's success
- provide opportunities for children to take risks without fear of failure

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- value and praise children's efforts
- introduce tasks and books in such a way as to challenge and entice the children to become involved
- expect children to succeed

Useful Websites

<http://resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/literacy/index.htm>

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/FindBook>

<http://www.magickeys.com/books/index.html#books>

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Section 2



Fluency is defined as the 'ability to read expressively and meaningfully as well as accurately and with appropriate speed' (Padak and Rasinski 2008, p.3). Fluency not only enhances the reader's meaning and understanding of the text but also greatly increases the amount of reading material readers can access. Fluency forms the bridge between two major components of reading: word recognition and comprehension (Rasinski 2004). Fluent readers recognise words accurately and automatically. They group words into phrases, they know where to place emphasis and stress on certain words and phrases and they are conscious of changing their pace of reading based on the text and audience.

There are three key elements in the teaching of reading fluency: *Accuracy (Ability to identify words accurately)*, *Automaticity (ability to recognize words and phrases automatically and without conscious effort)* and *Prosody (pitch, phrasing and intonation)*.

Fluency is the ability to read aloud with expression to demonstrate an understanding of the author's message" (Department of Education and Training in Western Australia, 2004, p.30). According to McKenna & Stahl (2009) the three key components of reading fluency are

- accurate word recognition (**accuracy**)
- automaticity
- appropriate rhythm and intonation of speech (**prosody**)

Accuracy: Accuracy refers to the children's ability to identify words correctly and relies on the acquisition of an extensive bank of sight vocabulary and the development of word identification strategies

Prosody: Prosody concerns the ability to read with expression and can be developed through focussing on pitch, phrasing and accuracy.

Automaticity: This is the ability to read words without conscious decoding and involves the reader achieving a level of unitization. Through 'ungluing the child from the page' and reducing the amount of decoding that they need to do, their mental processing is freed up for comprehension.

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While other opinions highlight the importance of reading rate in connection with reading fluency, Beers contends that 'improving a student's reading rate doesn't automatically mean a student's attitude towards reading improves or that comprehension improves' (Beers, 2003). Bear describes a range of activities, both at home and at school, that support the development of fluent reading.

These include:

- exposure to modelled fluent reading at school and at home
- provision of opportunities to practice the fluent reading behaviours in meaningful contexts
- opportunities to focus on and practice reading developmentally using appropriate texts through guided and repeated reading activities

The following link explores whole school approaches to reading that focus on enhancing reading fluency <http://www.pdst.ie/node/294>.

Approaches addressed here include, Guided Reading, Reading Partners, Peer Tutoring, C.A.P.E.R., Readers Theatre and Shared Reading. Full details of all of these along with teachers' opinions of same are outlined in detail.

Other approaches for developing reading are tabulated below:

Activity	Method
Choral Reading	Children chorally read a portion of text altogether.
Taped Reading	In this activity, the teacher tapes the children reading individually. This can be done with the microphone on your interactive whiteboard or a tape recorder. The children may listen back to what they have read. They self-assess their own reading.
Echo Reading	The teacher may work with a small group/whole class/individual. The teacher models fluent reading and the children repeat the reading back to the teacher. They echo the teachers' expression and intonation etc.
Buddy Reading	Older children are paired with younger children. If children are too close in age, some readers might feel uncomfortable when reading aloud. There are benefits for the older and younger child here.
Readers' theatre	This is an oral performance of a script. It gives readers an opportunity to engage in meaningful re-reading of a text.


Useful Websites

<http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/RTE.html>

<http://www.thebestclass.org/rtscripts.html>

<http://www.teachingheart.net/readerstheater.htm>

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Comprehension Strategies

“The ultimate objective of reading is comprehension or the reconstruction of meaning”

English Curriculum, Teacher Guidelines

The teaching of reading needs to include a range of comprehension strategies. Comprehension strategies can be defined as the ‘mental processes’ that good readers use to understand text. These strategies need to be explicitly taught towards developing independent readers who engage meaningfully with text.

The process of comprehension begins before we start to ‘read’ and continues even after the ‘reading’ is finished. Good readers use pre-reading strategies like previewing the text and use post-reading strategies like summarizing in addition to the many strategies they use to make meaning during ‘reading’ itself. By dividing instruction into pre-reading, during reading and post-reading, teachers can design activities for each stage that will improve student’s comprehension and also provide opportunities for teachers to demonstrate strategies that readers can use at each stage (Pardo, 2004).

Strategies should be introduced and mastered individually. However, over time the child should develop a repertoire of strategies which they can independently draw on when reading. For this reason comprehension strategies should be developed from the earliest levels of the primary school across a range of genres and modalities (both print and digital).

Children need opportunities to practice and consolidate these strategies in a cross curricular manner. A variety of fiction and nonfiction texts including picture books can be used for strategy instruction. Samples of such books are highlighted on the next page.

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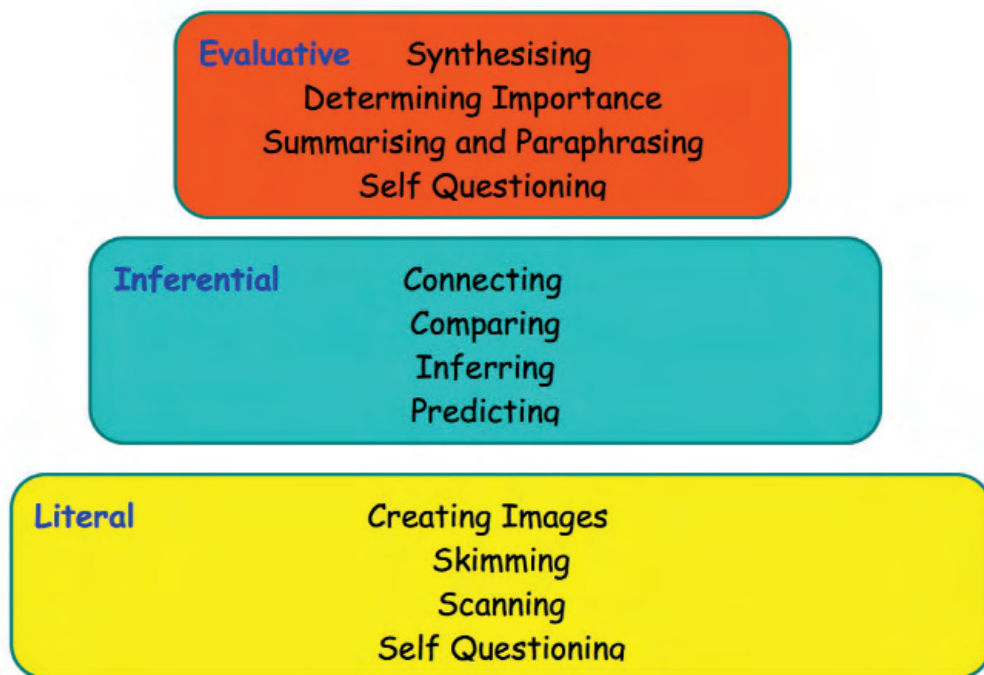
List of Reading Strategies:

Reading Strategies	Description
Predicting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps activate prior knowledge Based on clues in text (pictures, subtitles, etc.)
Connecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting prior knowledge to new information
Comparing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking more specifically about connections they are making, e.g. How is this different to....?
Inferring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking information from a text and creating their own interpretations beyond the literal level.
Synthesising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piecing information together as students read a text, to keep track of what is happening
Creating Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating sensory images to assist with overall comprehension of a text
Self-questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a framework for active learning as students engage with the text to find answers
Skimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glancing quickly through material to gain an overall view of text
Scanning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glancing through a text to locate specific details , e.g. names, dates etc.
Determining Importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritising most important information from phrase, sentence, paragraph, chapter or whole text
Summarising and Paraphrasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing larger texts to focus on important elements Re-stating/re-writing text in own words using key words to capture main focus

Adapted from First Steps Reading Resource Book

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The diagram below places these strategies into 3 levels, ranging from the lower order literal type to the higher order evaluative type.



A booklet **Guiding Comprehension - teaching for meaning** outlining various comprehension strategies and activities to support implementation can be found on <http://www.pdst.ie/node/482>



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Section 4

Word Identification Strategies

Word identification or word attack strategies enable students to tackle unfamiliar words. It is important that we equip children with the necessary skills needed to identify unknown words. Word identification strategies need to be explicitly taught and include 'sounding out', 'chunking', 're-reading', 'reading on', 'using analogy', 'consulting a reference', and 'adjusting your reading rate'.

Re-Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating opportunities for deeper understanding, word identification and developing fluency
Reading On	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skipping unfamiliar word(s) and reading on to provide sufficient context to determine unknown word/phrase
Adjusting Reading Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adjusting rate where appropriate, e.g. slowing down to comprehend new information, or speeding up to scan for key words
Sounding Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using knowledge of letter-sound relationship to decode unknown words
Chunking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breaking multi-syllabic words into units larger than individual phonemes
Using Analogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transferring what they know about familiar words to help them identify unfamiliar words
Consulting a Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using a dictionary, thesaurus, reference chart or glossary to help find word meanings/pronunciations

Section 5



"The limits of my language are the limits of my mind. All I know is what I have words for" (Ludwig Wittgenstein 1953)

Vocabulary development is the enrichment and extension of pupils' word knowledge and understanding. Vocabulary consists of the words we understand when we hear or read them (*receptive vocabulary*) and words we speak or write (*expressive vocabulary*). We build vocabulary by picking up words that we read or hear and through direct instruction from teachers or other professionals. Mehigan (2009: 183-196) suggests that "learning, as a language based activity, is fundamentally and profoundly dependent on vocabulary knowledge – knowledge of words and word meanings". He states that four types of vocabulary are often mentioned by researchers:

Listening vocabulary – the words we need to know to understand what we hear

Speaking Vocabulary – the words we use when we speak

Reading Vocabulary – the words we need to understand what we read

Writing Vocabulary – the words we use in writing

He claims that these categories are significant because the source of children's vocabulary knowledge changes as they become more familiar with the written word.

There is a strong correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension. Pupils who come to pre-school/junior infants with a rich and varied vocabulary tend to have a better understanding of the texts they read and, as their reading comprehension increases, their vocabulary knowledge expands accordingly. Conversely, pupils who begin school with limited vocabulary knowledge may struggle with reading comprehension which in turn can limit their vocabulary growth. Even in the very young years of a child's life, vocabulary instruction can influence the child's reading ability across the various subjects and throughout their school careers (Jalongo and Sobolak 2010). For effective language instruction, teachers need to provide rich and varied language experiences, foster



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an awareness and love of language and words, directly teach individual words and teach word learning strategies. Beck et. al, (2002) categorise vocabulary into three main layers or tiers.

Kind of Word	Explanation	Examples
Tier 1	Tier one consists of the most basic words. Sight words, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and early reading words occur at this level.	clock, baby, happy, orange, boy, friend
Tier 2	Tier two consists of high frequency words used by mature language users across several content areas. Tier two words are Important for reading comprehension and oral communication, contain multiple meanings and increased descriptive vocabulary.	coincidence, absurd, hasty, perseverance, malevolent, treacherous, incredible
Tier 3	Tier three consists of low-frequency words that occur in specific domains such as curriculum subjects, hobbies, occupations, geographic regions, technology, weather, etc. We usually learn these words when a specific need arises. E.g. <i>condensation/evaporation</i> in geography or <i>chlorophyll</i> in science.	Cirrus; beaufort scale; ferras sulphatae, precipitation.

It important to remember that tier two and three words are not always clear-cut in their tier classification. Condensation, for example could be included in either the two or three tier word categories. Beck et al, (2002) recommend providing explicit instruction on the high-utility words (tier two) in reading classes. Teachers select tier two words based on their importance and utility, their instructional potential, and student's conceptual understanding. The word 'collaboration' is an example because students may have a conceptual understanding of what it means to 'work together', even though they may not know the word 'collaboration'. Content-specific words are best learned in the subject area where they are encountered. Teachers should select content-specific words that are the most important for understanding the concepts that students are expected to learn. It is a good idea to pre-teach these important words prior to reading the text as this will facilitate greater understanding. It is important to note also that full understanding and use of vocabulary occurs only over time and multiple encounters. Learning new words does not just mean recognising them in print, it involves acquiring new meaning and an in-depth knowledge of the word (Beck, McKeown, Kucan, 2002).

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Activities to Support Vocabulary Development		
Activity	What is it?	Examples
Small words in big words	Find some little words hiding in words from the graph.	Caterpillar Cat pill at
Semantic Gradient	Select one word from text. Select three or four synonyms for the word. Order the words in terms of their intensity.	Scorching/sunny/sultry/humid Wet/drizzling/showery/rainy
Compound Words	Break compound word up into their components.	Sandcastle: sand + castle Butterfly: butter + fly
Multiple Meanings	To draw children's attention to the multiple meaning of words.	Cross =emotion/verb/noun Blue=emotion/colour/cookery term
Vocabulary Deep Processing Activity	To gain a deeper understanding of a word through questioning. Word can be written on board and four circles drawn around it with the heading opposite (in bold)	See accompanying worksheet
Word Wall	Can be used to display high frequency words, word families, names and other vocabulary.	
Word Taxonomy	This is a list of words arranged in alphabetical order pertaining to a particular topic or subject area.	See accompanying example
Valuing Vocabulary, Vetting Vocabulary	Children select words from text and categorise them under a number of headings (<i>words I know and use, words I know, words I don't know</i>) on a worksheet provided by teacher	See accompanying table
Word of the week	Select word of the week and discuss. Display word on a laminated background. At the end of the week a new word may be displayed and the 'old' word displayed on the word wall.	

TAXONOMY OF HALLOWEEN WORDS

<p>A abandoned afraid awful afterlife alarming apparition autumn</p> <p>B bat Beware bewitching bizarre black cat blood bloodcurdling bone rattling bogeyman bone broomstick bubbling brew</p> <p>C cackle cackling cape carve cauldron cemetery chilling cloak cobweb coffin corpse costume cottage creepy creaking crypt</p>	<p>D dark darkness dead deafening decaying demon devil devilish disguise dreadful</p> <p>E eerie elf enchant evil eyeballs</p> <p>F fairy fangs fantasy fear fog fright furious frightening frightful frothing fiendish</p> <p>G gaunt ghastly ghost ghostly ghoul ghoulish goblin gory grave gravestone grin grim Grim Reaper grisly groaning grotesque gruesome</p>	<p>H hair-raising Halloween hat haunt haunted house hayride headstone headless horseman hobgoblin hocus pocus horrible horrifying howl</p> <p>I icy isolated invisible</p> <p>K knees knocking</p> <p>L Lantern luminous</p> <p>M macabre magical magic wand mask masquerade mausoleum menacing midnight mist monster monstrous moonlight moonlit morbid mournful moaning mummy mysterious</p>	<p>N night nightmare noises</p> <p>O October ogre orange otherworldly owl ominous</p> <p>P paranormal petrified phantom phenomenal phosphorescent poltergeist potion possessed pungent pumpkin</p> <p>Q quaking quivering quiet</p> <p>R repulsive revolting raucous</p> <p>S scary scream scythe shriek squeal shadow shadowy shocking skeleton skull smirk spectre spell spectacular</p>	<p>S cont. spider spider web spine-chilling seething sinister spook spooky startling summoning supernatural superstition sweets</p> <p>T talisman tarantula tangled terrible terrifying threatening thrilling tomb tombstone troll</p> <p>U unearthly unnerving</p> <p>V vampire vanish</p> <p>W wand warlock web weird werewolf wicked witch witchcraft wizard wizardry wraith wrinkled</p> <p>Z zombie</p>
Michelle Hannafin 2013				

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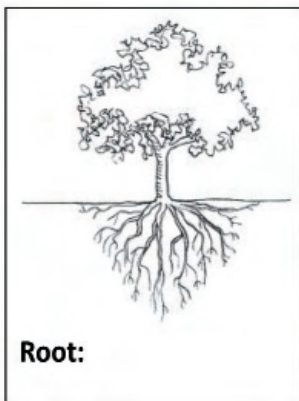
Vocabulary Deep Processing Activity

Word

Picture

Prefixes

Word meaning: _____



Synonyms

Antonyms

Clues to help me remember



Sentences

(1) _____

(2) _____

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Valuing Vocabulary and Vetting Vocabulary Activity

	1	2	3	4
Words	I know the word and could use it in conversation or in my writing	I know the word and understand what it means	I remember seeing it or hearing it before	Don't know it and haven't heard it

Useful Websites

http://www.scoilnet.ie/reading_literacy.shtm

<http://www.theschoolbell.com/Links/Dolch/Contents.html>

<http://www.vocabulary.co.il/english-language-games/>

<http://www.mrsperkins.com>

<http://pbskids.org/games/vocabulary.html>

<http://www.schooljotter.com/showpage.php?id=183565>

Section 6

Phonological Awareness and Phonics

Two Important Definitions

Phonological Awareness	Ability to recognise, combine and manipulate the different sounds of spoken words
Phonics	The combination of (letters) in written language and phonemes (sounds) in spoken language and how to use these correspondences to read and spell

Phonological Awareness

Phonological Awareness can be defined as “an ability to recognise, combine and manipulate the different sound units of spoken words” (Department of Education and Training in Western Australia, 2004, p. 73). It is an aural and an oral skill that is unrelated to intelligence (as measured in I.Q. tests), meaning that ‘Phonological awareness’ is very different to ‘Phonics’. The starting point is the sounds we hear in words as opposed to letters on a page. Phonological awareness is a central part of learning to read (Adams, 1990; Goswami, 1986 ref; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), 2000). Although different to phonics, it is an important precursor to learning phonics effectively (Savage, 2008).

Levels of Phonological Awareness:

Phonological awareness is an umbrella term. It can be divided into the following levels:

Syllabic Awareness

Onset and Rime

Phonemic Awareness

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1. Syllabic Awareness:

This involves syllable blending, segmentation and isolation.

Syllable blending: The teacher demonstrates this by saying a word such as “po-ta-to” pronouncing syllables with one second intervals between them before asking pupils ‘What is this word?’

Syllable Segmentation: the teacher presents words for segmentation by showing real objects or pictures or by simply saying the word and asking the students to segment it e.g. win-dow-sill. Kinaesthetic reinforcement can be helpful here i.e. get the students to use their two hands and to touch their heads for the first syllable, their shoulders for the second syllable, their hips for the third syllable, knees for the fourth and toes for the fifth. Alternatively get the children to clap and also say how many syllables.

Syllable Isolation: teacher presents 2 syllable words which also happen to be compound words, for example, postman, playtime, playground etc. The words are presented orally and the pupils are asked to say the first part or first syllable on its own before advancing to the second syllable. The teacher then proceeds to 2 syllable words which are not compound words for example, teach-er, table, etc. and asks the students to say either the first syllable or the second syllable only. Syllables can then be isolated using 3 and maybe 4 syllable words.

2. Onset-Rime Awareness (Rhyming):

All syllables can be divided up into onsets and rimes. For example, the word “bat” b = onset, at = rime. All syllables have rimes but not all syllables have onsets.

Children with ability to use onset and rime can:

- recite nursery rhymes
- tell you if words they hear (or see pictures of) rhyme with one another i.e. discriminate and select rhyming words
- think up words to rhyme with a visual cue or orally presented word i.e. generate rhyming words independently (Ní Mhurchú, 1998)

Activities to develop onset and rime may include the following:

- Learn traditional Nursery Rhymes and Other Rhyming Poems
- Listen to Stories with strong rhyming patterns e.g. Walker Books - This is the Bear series.
- Rhyme Discrimination Exercises
 - Matching pictures that rhyme

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- Discrimination of pairs of rhyming words and non-rhyming words. Present pairs of words orally and see if the pupils can tell you whether they rhyme or not. Examples dog log pen net late mate and so on
- Discrimination of words that rhyme with target word: Present a word orally. Now call out a list of words and see if the pupils spot the ones that rhyme with the target word. Example Target Word 'Bin'

Bat, Pin, Win, Ten, Can, Twin.

- Supplying Rhyming Words. This is rhyming at an oral or a productive level.
 - Rhyme completion: Ask children to finish rhymes e.g. I have a shoe. Its colour is(blue), I have a kite, its colour is (white)
 - "I Spy": I spy something and it rhymes with 'ake'. (cake), I spy something and it rhymes with 'cook' (look)
 - Composing Simple Rhymes: Give the structure of the first few lines e.g. I know a man. His name is(Dan). He drives a(van) and so on.
 - Real Poems: Poems with predictable rhyming endings are useful here. Read the poem emphasising the rhyming words. After practice, pause before some endings and see if the pupils can supply the rhymes. 'Sounds Abound' and 'Sound Linkage' and 'Blueprint for Literacy' have lots of rhyme supply exercises. Rhyme Box: Put various objects in a box. These can be used for eliciting rhymes.

Rhyming Games

Name of Game	Instructions
Play Ball	Students sit or stand in a circle. A criterion is nominated for the type of word to be provided; for instance, words that rhyme with 'cat'. One student is given a ball and tosses it to another, saying a word that fulfils the criterion. Students continue to toss the ball to one another until no more words can be provided. The game then continues with a new criterion.
Snap and Clap	Begin with a simple snap, clap rhythm, then say a word. Students are challenged to repeat the snap, clap rhythm and then to provide a rhyming word; for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - snap, snap, clap – teacher says 'coat'; - snap, snap, clap – student 1 says 'float';

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	<p>– snap, snap, clap – student 2 says 'boat'.</p> <p>This is continued until students cannot think of anymore rhyming words; a new pattern with a new word is then chosen.</p>
Mystery bag	In the bag I can feel something whose name rhymes with 'dish'. What could it be?
What Could It Be?	<p>This involves the creation of clues that are presented orally for students to solve; for instance:</p> <p>Using onset and rime: 'I'm thinking of an animal. The animal's name is /k/ /ow/. What could it be?</p> <p>Using rhyming words: 'I'm thinking of an animal. The animal's name rhymes with 'bat'. What could it be?'</p> <p><i>Rhyme awareness:</i> listen while I say three words. Tell me which one doesn't rhyme with the others.</p>
Stepping Place	Twelve A3/A4 numbered pictures are placed on the floor. Teacher/child throws two dice and child goes to that numbered picture and supplies a rhyming word to match the picture they are at. A variation of this could involve using only one dice. Numbers 1-12 can be on laminated cards and pictures can be changed regularly.
Pass it on	Children sit in a circle with the teacher in the centre. The teacher throws a soft ball/bean bag to a child and gives the child a word. The child has to supply a rhyming word before passing it back to the teacher.
Rhyme Time Game (supplying rhyming words to a given picture stimulus)	<p>Materials Required: Picture stimulus and rhyming words on flashcards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show the picture e.g. picture of a dog and ask class/pupils for rhyming words. - Record these on the blackboard. Accept nonsense words but don't record. - When the pupils finish giving rhyming words, present the rhyming words on flashcards for the students. If they have

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	<p>listed them, they win the card, if not the teacher keeps the card.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whoever has the most cards at the end wins. Ask the students what these rhyming words have in common i.e. (rime – ending). - Then elicit the particular letters that make that ending. <p>This is more advanced as there is writing and reading involved and the link to phonics/phonics training is being made with the introduction of the letters and letter patterns. The following are some rhyming lists to start off with (of course some cards can be removed from the pack if they are considered outside the ability range of the pupils playing the game).</p> <p>PAN: man, fan, can, ran, an, than, bran, flan, span, tan ...</p> <p>SIT: lit, knit, bit, fit, pit, hit wit, split, spit, it, kit, skit, grit</p> <p>POP: shop, hop, bop, crop, mop, sop, stop, top, drop, flop, chop, slop.</p> <p>SUN: bun, gun, run, stun, shun, pun, nun, spun</p> <p>BELL: shell, smell, well, tell, well, cell, sell, yell, dwell, hell, spell, fell, swell, Nell ...</p>
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(Adapted from: Department of Education and Training in Western Australia (2004) First Steps Reading Resource Book)

3. Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is the awareness that spoken language consists of a sequence of phonemes (a single unit of sound). There are 44 phonemes or individual sounds, 24 consonant phonemes and 20 vowel phonemes in the English language.

Features of effective phonemic awareness instruction are

- child appropriate (NICHHD, 2001; Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998; Yopp & Yopp, 2000)
- deliberate, purposeful and explicit

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- considered as one aspect of skill development within a balanced literacy framework and is not meaningful in and of itself.

Time spent on word play, nursery rhymes, riddles, and general exposure to storybooks develops phonemic awareness. Classroom activities and tasks which can be used to practise or assess phonemic awareness (Adams, Treiman & Pressley, 1998; Yopp & Yopp, 2000) are as follows:

- Phoneme blending: e.g. What word is /fl/o/p/ (flop)?
- Phoneme categorisation e.g. Which word does not belong? Bus, bun, rag? (rag).
- Phoneme identity for initial, final and medial sounds e.g. Does 'pack' begin with a /p/ sound (as in party)?
- Phoneme segmenting e.g. How many phonemes are there in 'ship'? (sh/i/p/).
- Phoneme isolation e.g. Tell me the first sound in /paste/?
- Phoneme deletion e.g. What is 'smile' without the /s/? (NCCA, 2012: 126)

Phonemic Awareness Games

Name of Game	Explanation									
Mystery Bag	<p>Place some ‘mystery objects’ in a bag. Select one object at a time, but do not show it to the students. Provide clues to help them identify it. For example,</p> <p>In the bag I can feel something whose name begins with ‘f’. What could it be?</p> <p>In the mystery bag I can feel a f /ish. What could it be? The procedure is then repeated with other objects.</p>									
Hunting for Words	<p>Challenge students to go ‘hunting’ for words in the classroom, at home, or in the general environment. The words should fulfil a given criterion, such as words beginning with ‘m’, words ending with ‘t’ or words with four letters. Students copy the words into their ‘spy pads’ and later they share and discuss them as a class.</p>									
Sing a Song	<p>Using Songs and Rhymes for phonemic awareness sung to the tune of ‘Old McDonald Had a Farm’.</p>									
Tic Tac Toe	<p>Tic Tac Toe is played in the same way as Noughts and Crosses but students use pictures to create a sequence of three (diagonally, vertically or horizontally). Player A may have to choose pictures of words that begin with the letter ‘b’ and player B may have to choose pictures of words that begin with the letter ‘s’.</p> <p>Students play the game in pairs. Each pair is provided with a playing grid and a selection of picture cards. Each student selects five cards matching their given criterion. They then take turns to place their cards on the grid. The winner is the first to place three words horizontally, vertically or diagonally on the grid.</p> <table><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>									

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Elkonin Boxes

Elkonin Boxes (Elkonin, 1973) support students in identifying the number of sounds in a word, which is not always the same as the number of letters; for instance, 'bike' has four letters but only three sounds.

Draw up an Elkonin Box on the board. Ensure that the box has the same number of spaces as there are sounds in a chosen word. Begin by asking students, for example, 'What sound do you hear first in "cat"?' When they respond with the first sound, not the letter name, place a counter in the first space. Repeat this procedure for each sound in the word, saying 'What sound do you hear next?' Place a counter in the second and third spaces respectively when each sound is identified. Finish by counting the number of sounds.



As an extension, Elkonin Boxes can be used to help students identify the location of particular sounds in a word. This could be done by giving a word such as 'bat', and then asking the students to put a counter in the space where they hear the sound /t/.

(Adapted from: Department of Education and Training in Western Australia (2004) First Steps Reading Resource Book)

Phonics

Systematic phonics instruction has been defined as follows:

Phonics is a method of instruction that teaches students correspondences between graphemes (letters) in written language and phonemes (sounds) in spoken language and how to use these correspondences to read and spell. Phonics instruction is systematic when all the major grapheme–phoneme correspondences are taught and they are covered in a clearly defined sequence. (DES, 2006, p. 18).

Research tells us that phonics should be taught early in a systematic and structured way and is best preceded by training in phonological awareness. It is important that students understand that letters have a name and represent sounds in words. Letters may represent a number of different sounds depending on their position in the word and the surrounding letters. For a sound knowledge of phonics, students need to be aware of the following points

- letter names are constant, whereas sounds vary. It is important for students to know the names of the letters of the alphabet to be able to understand which letters represent particular sounds and vice versa
- letters can represent different sounds, e.g. Andrew, Amy, Audrey
- letters sometimes work alone and sometimes in groups, e.g. me, bread, sheet, team
- the sound that a letter or a group of letters represents depends on where the letter is in a word and what other letters surround it, e.g. cat, city, Christmas, chop
- the same sound can be represented by different letters, e.g. beach, me, key, ski, thief
- the same letter(s) may represent different sounds, e.g. rough, cough, dough, plough

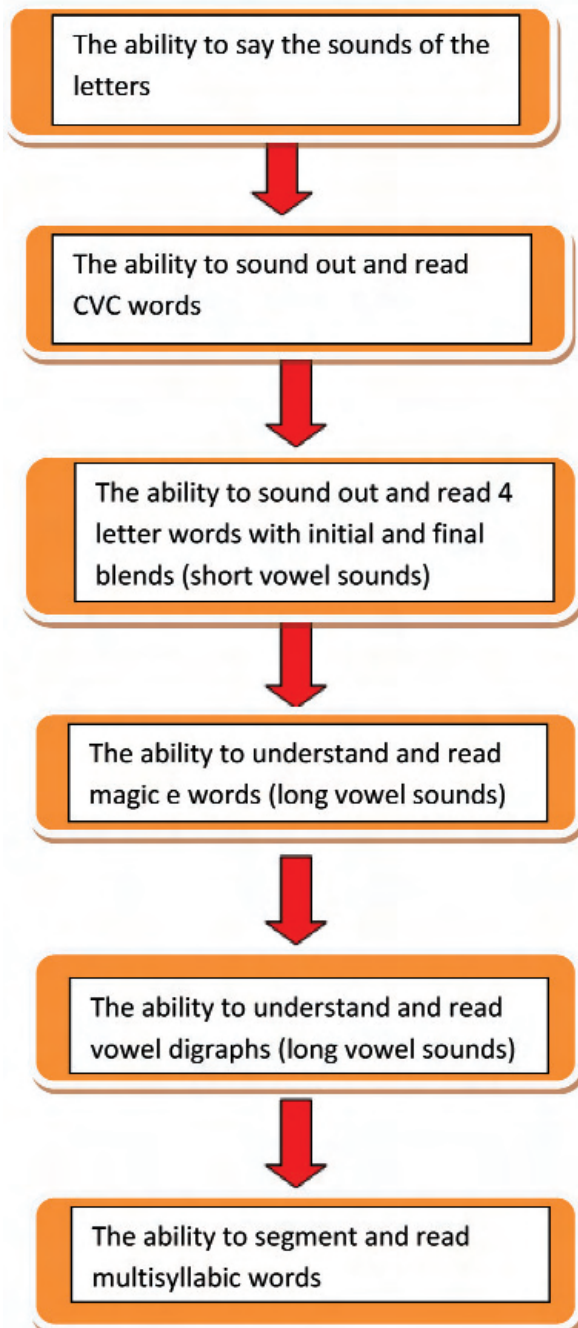
The following are key aspects of phonics that need to be taught and can be subsequently assessed using printed text:

- knowledge of the sounds of letters and letter clusters
- ability to use analogies to identify unknown words (e.g. identify 'sat' if 'cat' is already known)
- ability to use the initial sound and context to identify a word
- ability to identify the initial and final sounds in a word

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- ability to blend sounds into words
- ability to apply knowledge of letter patterns (e.g. long vowel sound in CVC words)
- ability to self-check whether an attempt is meaningful (NCCA, 2012, p, 233)

A suggested sequence for teaching phonics might be the following:



Strategies for teaching phonics

- Making and Breaking Words

This strategy comes directly from Reading Recovery (Clay, 1993). The teacher makes a word that the child already knows (a regular phonic word) from their current reading for example like. The child is shown how to generate more words by changing the initial letter for example hike, mike, bike. The child reads the new words by running their finger under each one and reading them. The child should always locate the known word or similar words in a book after activity to link the strategy back to the text. This technique can be used for adding inflections, or changing the medial vowel, as well. Making and breaking words helps a child to see how words work and how you can read or write a new word by looking at and thinking about a known word.

- Chunking

If a child can learn chunks or parts of words that are often found together, they can look for those parts in unknown words that they are trying to read (Clay, 1993, Fox, 2004). For instance in the case of an unknown word such as 'farmer', the teacher prompts by saying "find a part you know" or "can you find a little word in that big word? The child might identify 'farm' or 'er'. The child or children can brainstorm words with these chunks and make a chart or list which uses the above chunks for example, farmhouse, farmyard, farming, farmed, teacher, player, rubber. These can be practiced for reading.

Another way teachers can practise the use of chunks is to write out several unknown words that have chunks in them, and let the child underline the parts that they know to try figure out the word (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2008). Always remember to let the child see examples in a book that the child/children are reading

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Sample Decoding Strategy Chart

Decoding Strategy Chart

Step 1: Look for the word parts at the **beginning**.
(prefixes)

Step 2: Look for word parts at the **end**.
(suffixes)

Step 3: Look for familiar spelling patterns in the **base word**.
(Think about the 6 syllable spelling patterns.)

Step 4: Sound out the word parts and blend together.

Step 5: Say the word parts fast.

Ask,

"Is that a word I've heard before?"

"Does it make sense in this sentence?"



Useful Websites

http://curry.virginia.edu/go/wil/rimes_and_rhymes.htm#Week1

<http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/vtc/ngfl/ngfl-flash/alphabet-eng/alphabet.htm>

<http://www.starfall.com>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/clusters/blender/index.shtml>

<http://resources.teachnet.ie/pbarry/flash/index.html>

<http://www.tampareads.com/phonics/phonicsindex.htm>

<http://www.schooljotter.com/showpage.php?id=183569>

<http://phonologicalawareness.org/6.html>

[http://www.freereading.net/index.php?title=Phonological Awareness Activities](http://www.freereading.net/index.php?title=Phonological_Awareness_Activities)

<http://www.earobics.com/gamegoo/games/pawpark3/pawpark3.html>

Section 7

Assessment in Reading

Schools measure the effectiveness of reading initiatives in many different ways. In order to do this, it is crucial that we gather and analyse information before we begin an initiative, so that on conclusion we can repeat a similar assessment in order to measure the success of the initiative. In this section, we outline some of the many sources of evidence that we can use to monitor pupil's reading development and the impact of our reading initiatives.

“Assessment is the process of generating, gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting evidence of learning in individuals, groups or systems, which relies upon a number of instruments, one of which may be a test. Educational assessment provides information about progress in learning” (Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, Guidelines for Schools, NCCA: 2007: 4)



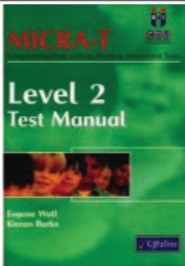
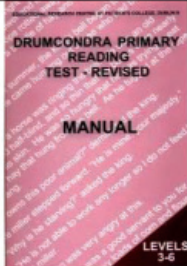


Reading Assessment Continuum	
Self-Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Questionnaire ○ Reading Logs ○ Tools to allow pupils to reflect on positive aspects of their work and to focus on an area for improvement e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WWW (What Went Well) and EBI (Even Better If) - Two Stars (identifying the positives) and a wish (identify area for improvement) - Ladders (See pg. 85 'Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, Guidelines for Schools' (NCCA, 2007)) - Thumbs up/ thumbs down (Pg. 85 also, NCCA, 2007) ○ Rule of Thumb – when at the library the children choose books independently.

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	<p>If on the first page the children come to a word they cannot read they raise their little finger. They continue this with each difficult word they meet and if they get to their thumb on the first page then the text is too difficult for them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Numerical scale of understanding 1-5 ○ Prompts – <i>the most important thing I learnt was... what I found difficult was... what helped me best...</i> ○ KWL – What I know already, What I Want to Know, What I have Learned (Pg. 92, NCCA, 2007) 												
Conferencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guided reading ○ Independent reading ○ Conferencing record sheet teacher/parent (see Appendix for C.A.P.E.R.) 												
Portfolio Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Running Records ○ Taped Reading 												
Concept Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Graphic Organisers 												
Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bloom's Taxonomy of Questioning See pg. 86-88, 'Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, Guidelines for Schools' (NCCA, 2007) <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Evaluation</td><td>check, critique, hypothesise, judge, debate</td></tr> <tr> <td>Synthesis</td><td>create, compose, plan, design, propose, formulate, invent, predict, construct, imagine, devise, combine</td></tr> <tr> <td>Analysis</td><td>Analyse, compare, investigate, identify, order, connect; distinguish, contrast, categorise, separate, explain, infer</td></tr> <tr> <td>Application</td><td>Solve, use, construct, examine, apply, calculate, show, illustrate, complete, classify, demonstrate, modify</td></tr> <tr> <td>Understanding</td><td>Retell, summarise, describe, explain, discuss, interpret, outline, predict, restate, compare, estimate, contrast</td></tr> <tr> <td>Knowledge</td><td>tell, list, define, name, when, where, identify, show, state, locate, relate, who</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Evaluation	check, critique, hypothesise, judge, debate	Synthesis	create, compose, plan, design, propose, formulate, invent, predict, construct, imagine, devise, combine	Analysis	Analyse, compare, investigate, identify, order, connect; distinguish, contrast, categorise, separate, explain, infer	Application	Solve, use, construct, examine, apply, calculate, show, illustrate, complete, classify, demonstrate, modify	Understanding	Retell, summarise, describe, explain, discuss, interpret, outline, predict, restate, compare, estimate, contrast	Knowledge	tell, list, define, name, when, where, identify, show, state, locate, relate, who
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	<p>○ Building Bridges of Understanding – Comprehension Development</p> 
Teacher Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Checklist ○ Running Records ○ Drumcondra English Profiles 
Teacher-Designed Tasks and Tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oral assignments ○ Individual tasks ○ Group tasks ○ Cloze tests
Standardised Testing	  <p>Interpreting Standardised Test Results</p> <p>Standardised test results may be interpreted in different ways and at different levels. Individual pupils results can be analysed, tests can be examined from a whole class perspective and both of these analyses can then be utilised to feed into the building of a whole school picture. This whole-school picture allows us to identify trends, emerging patterns or whole school strengths and areas for improvement. This 'big picture' will inevitably prove invaluable when used as a basis for whole school planning in English.</p>

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Interpreting and Reporting on Individual Pupils' Performance:

See 'Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum, Guidelines for Schools' (NCCA, 2007)

- pg 62 & 63 'Interpreting Standardised Test Results in English Reading and
- Pg 65 'Reporting Standardised Test Results in English Reading'

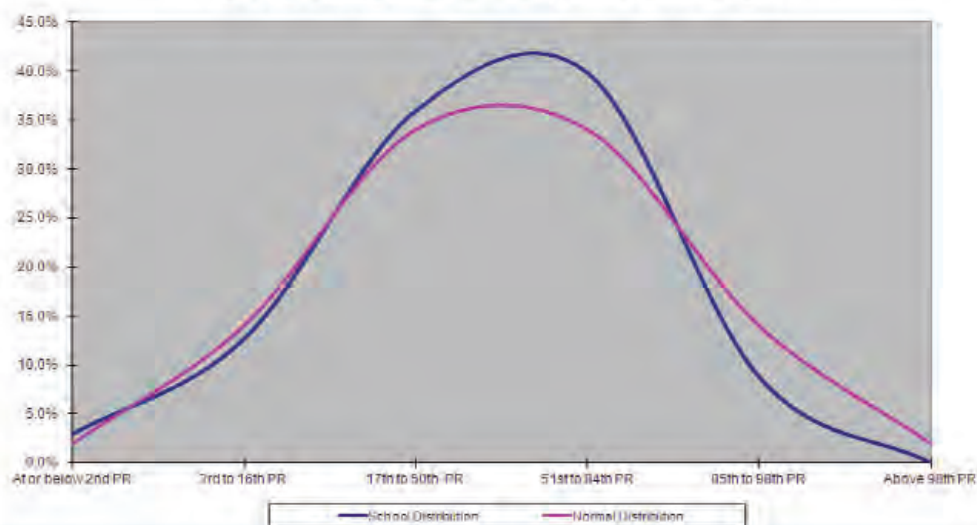
Whole School Analysis of Standardised Tests:

Excel is a simple tool that can be used to compile and analyse whole school results in English and support a school in analysing standardised test results. See www.pdst.ie for excel files, seen below.

School Name N.S. - English Test Results (MICRA-T) Date:

	At or below 2nd PR	3rd to 16th PR	17th to 50th PR	51st to 84th PR	85th to 98th PR	Above 98th PR	Total	16th or Below	85th or Above
1st Class			3	6	3		12	0.0%	25.0%
2nd Class		4	6	8			18	22.2%	0.0%
3rd Class			13	8			21	0.0%	0.0%
4th Class		3	5	7	1		16	18.8%	6.3%
5th Class	2	5	5	7	2		21	33.3%	9.5%
6th Class	1	1	5	5	3		15	13.3%	20.0%
Total	3	13	37	41	9	0	103	15.5%	8.7%
Percentage	2.9%	12.6%	35.9%	39.8%	8.7%	0.0%			

Test Results Compared with Normal Distribution



Diagnostic Tests

- Neale Analysis
- Jackson Phonics
- Running Records
 - Reading Fluency Test – number of words read in one minute minus the number of errors made
- Aston Index
- CHIPS see www.pdst.ie and www.sess.ie for more

Sample Assessment Tools for Reading

Self-Assessment

Two Stars and a Wish



Reading Response

Sentence Starters



- I began to think of
- I love the way
- I can't believe
- I wonder why
- My favourite character is
- That reminded me of

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My Reading Response Journal

Title:

My favourite part of the story is:



I liked it.



It was alright.

My favourite character is: _____
because



I didn't like it.

Reading Attitude Questionnaire

Place a cross on the line that shows how you feel about reading

1. Do you like to read books at home?

Yes, a lot No, not at all

2. Do you like to get books for presents?

Yes, a lot No, not at all

3. Do you like someone reading books to you?

Yes, a lot No, not at all

4. Do you like to read in free time at school?

Yes, a lot No, not at all

Reading Survey for Students

Section A

(1) When I am reading, I think about what will happen next and I guess from the author's clues.

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

(2) When I am reading I make pictures of the story in my head.

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

(3) When I am reading I think about things the story reminds me of e.g. something from my own life, something from another story or something from the world.

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

Section B

(4) What do you do when you are reading and you come to a word that you don't know?

(5) What do you do when you can sound out words in your reading but you don't understand what the reading means?

Section C

(6) I like being a good reader

☺ Agree

☹ Don't know

☹ Disagree

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(7) I read at home with my family

☺ Agree ☹ Don't know ☹ Disagree

(8) I go to the library

☺ Agree ☹ Don't know ☹ Disagree

(9) I learn a lot of things from reading

☺ Agree ☹ Don't know ☹ Disagree

(10) I read about my hobbies

☺ Agree ☹ Don't know ☹ Disagree

Section 8

Working with your children

Top Tips for Parents/Guardians



Infants to 1 st	2 nd to 4 th	5 th to 6 th
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read to your child as often as you can 2. Talk about books / characters / plots 3. Enrol your child in the local library 4. Provide a good role model by reading yourself / other family members 5. Keep audio tapes of familiar stories to play in the car 6. Vary the type of books read – stories / poems / information 7. Accept your child's efforts with praise 8. Concentrate on what he /she got right 9. Make reading together enjoyable 10. Take part in school based initiatives like 'Shared Reading' 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to read to your child every day. 2. Read some of the books your child enjoys so you can discuss it with him/her. 3. Encourage your child to read to younger brothers/ sisters. 4. Ensure that your child knows that you value and enjoy reading yourself. 5. Make sure there is a wide variety of reading material in your home – newspapers, magazines, information, cookery books etc. 6. Enrol and encourage your child to visit the local library once a week... 7. Discuss favourite authors. 8. Encourage your child to read articles / headlines in newspapers. 9. Encourage your child to guess unknown words. 10. Praise your child's efforts 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage your child to visit the local library as often as possible. 2. Recognise and praise your child's efforts in reading. 3. Ensure your child has access to a wide range of reading material – newspapers, magazines, guides etc. 4. Take an interest in different children's authors. 5. Discuss ideas and points of view proposed by newspaper articles etc. 6. Provide a well-lit study / reading area. 7. Ensure that you value and enjoy reading yourself. 8. Allow your child to choose his /her own reading material. 9. Encourage your child to read for information – timetables / weather forecasts / menus 10. Encourage your child to try and guess unknown words.

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